Oil exploration strategy of ONGC

1422. **SHRI** MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state :

(a) what has been the expenditure on oil exploration after 1975, year-wise ;

(b) whether vast areas are yet to be scientifically explored ;

(c) what plan Government have to devote greater attention towards oil exploration

(d) whether a different agency other than ONGC will be entrusted with oilfield exploration for new resources ; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY) : (a) The expenditure on oil exploration since the year 1975 has been as follows :

Year	Expenditure incurred (Rs. in crores)
1	2
1975-76 .	61-46
1976-77 .	67-95
1977-78 .	65-79
1978-79 .	67.93
979-80 . \	77-21
1980-81	105-36
1981-82	144-57
1982-83	292-10
1983-84	303-30
1984-85	397-98
1985-86	459-01
1986-87	634-98
1987-88	685-66
1988-89	729-84
1989-90	864-44

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It is intended to accelerate exploration activities by both OIL and ONGC and to also provide exploratory inputs in lesser known or explored areas.

(d) and (e) The Government has tried to involve foreign oil companies in the exploration for oil in India by inviting them to bid for blocks put on offer. So far three rounds of bidding have taken place. In the first round of bidding, contract for one block was signed with one foreign oil company, and in *the* round of bidding, contracts for 9 blocks were signed with five foreign oil companies. Under the programme of cooperation with the Soviet Union three Intensive Integrated Exploration Projects are also being implemented with Soviet participation in the North Cambay, Cauvery and West Bengal basins.